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STATE FOR EAP, EAP/RSP, EAP/CM

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TAGS: PREL PARM CH

SUBJECT: CHINA UNLIKELY TO CO-CHAIR ARF 1540 SEMINAR

REF: STATE 135735

Classified By: Political External Unit Chief Edgard Kagan. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Summary: China is unlikely to co-host an ASEAN Regional Forum Seminar on USNCR 1540 Implementation with us according to MFA Asian Affairs Department official Ma Jia. Lack of funding prevents China from co-hosting, Ma said, but she suggested that the United States might be able to reclama that decision during EAP Assistant Secretary Hill's upcoming visit. Separately, Singapore Embassy contacts told us that MFA Arms Control and Disarmament Department officials had raised objections to China's co-hosting the seminar as a way of showing their displeasure about U.S. nonproliferation sanctions of Chinese companies. End Summary.

¶2. (C) China is unlikely to be able to co-host the proposed ASEAN Regional Forum Seminar on USNCR 1540 Implementation, MFA Asian Affairs Department Regional Security Division Director Ma Jia told Poloff August ¶29. Responding to reftel points, Ma said China would like to co-host such a seminar but ran short of funding this year and had to withdraw to offer of co-hosting the seminar.

¶3. (C) Should the United States seek to reclama this decision, Ma suggested that EAP A/S Hill might raise the issue during upcoming meetings with AFM Cui Tiankai. She noted that Cui has just taken over responsibility for Asian Affairs from VFM Wu Dawei (whom A/S Hill wrote to on the issue in June) and Ma said Wu will likely soon retire from day-to-day responsibilities at the MFA. (Note: Ma worked for Wu both that the PRC Embassy in Tokyo in the 1990s and in the Korean Peninsula Affairs office until earlier this year. End Note.)

¶4. (C) Singapore Embassy Political Officer Patrick Lim told us separately on August 18 that China's refusal to co-host the seminar was a result of opposition from both the Finance as well as the Arms Control and Disarmament Departments of the MFA, with Arms Control and Disarmament Department officials being unhappy over the U.S. imposition of sanctions against PRC firms. Ma had told the Singaporeans of this issue in early August, Lim said. When Poloff asked directly whether U.S. non-proliferation sanctions were an issue in China's sponsorship decision, Ma would not be drawn and urged us to raise any such concerns directly to our Arms Control and Disarmament Department counterparts.

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